

**Arizona Supreme Court  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Dependent Children's Services Division**



**Jackson County Juvenile Court  
Operational Review – Final Report, June, 2004**

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**This report is an example of the Final Report. This report includes fictitious data collected from “Jackson County” Court, recommendations made by the review team, and the response of the fictitious Court including applicable corrective action plans.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Dependent Children's Services Division (DCSD) conducted a review of the Jackson County Juvenile Court (also referred to herein as "Court") beginning in April 2004. The review team considered the Court's oversight and implementation of requirements relating to the Court Improvement Program (CI), the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, and the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB). Review information was obtained through the initial information request (IIR), on-site data collection and the review of records kept at the State Program Offices. Specific findings and, where necessary, recommendations made by the review team, are located in the following report. Corrective action plans identified by the Court in response to the review team's recommendations have been inserted in the report where applicable. Appendix J, *Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans* lists the team's recommendations and the Court identified corrective action plans. The Courts complete response can be found as Appendix K, *Court Response to Recommendations*.

- The Jackson County Juvenile Court is in **substantial compliance** in addressing key requirements and all requirements relating to the **Court Improvement Program**. All involved court staff make consistent efforts to address the needs of the dependent children of Jackson County.

- The County program office is in **substantial compliance** in addressing all requirements relating to the **Court Appointed Special Advocate** program. County program staff and volunteers continue to work in collaboration with the court and other interested parties to address the needs of the dependent children for which they share case assignment. CASA volunteers continue to advocate for the children's best interests consistently.

- The County is in **substantial compliance** in addressing its requirements related to the **Foster Care Review Board**.

### *Of Particular Interest...*

Through many unique efforts, staff of the Jackson County Juvenile Court work on a daily basis to address the needs of dependent children. In an attempt to address the needs of dependent parents and their families, the Court has arranged for an information and referral service. The Court has compiled information on a broad range of available services and has made this information accessible either via a kiosk in the courthouse or at their web site, <http://www.Jackson.state.az.us/dependencinfo>. Court administration has also arranged an on call schedule so that a member of court administration is available during business hours to address questions asked by parents regarding the dependency process or services that might be available to them.

## Jackson County Operational Review Compliance Summary Table

Area	% Compliance	
	Key Elements	All Elements
<b>Court Improvement Program</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>92</b>
Budgetary Considerations	100	100
Reporting and Record Retention	100	98
Equipment, JOLTS	100	100
General Implementation Procedure	100	92
Courtroom Observation	90	90
Case File Review	91	86
<b>Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program</b>	<b>97</b>	
Program Plan and Financial Management	88	
County Program Operations	100	
Certification Screening Elements	92	
Training	91	
File Management – Dependency Case Files	95	
File Management – Volunteer Files	89	
Personnel	100	
Volunteer Complaint Process	100	
County Staff Qualifications	66	
County Staff Minimum Performance Standards	96	
Volunteer Status	100	
Volunteer Minimum Performance Standards	100	
Volunteer Mentor Minimum Performance Standards	Na	
<b>Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) Program</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Dependent Children's Services Division  
Jackson County Juvenile Court  
Operational Review - Final Report**

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Dependent Children's Services Division (DCSD), is responsible for overseeing the operation of dependency processing in the Arizona Juvenile Courts. This oversight includes review of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, the Court Improvement program (CI) and the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB).

Robert Shelley and Suzanne Johns, the DCSD operational review team, monitored the Jackson County Juvenile Court in April 2004. The Court's willingness to work with the review team throughout the review process was greatly appreciated.

The review of the Court Improvement Program focused on the Court's processing of dependency cases, the collection of information on dependency cases, and the administrative oversight of funds distributed through the program.

The review of the Jackson County CASA program focused on the Court's compliance in the areas of administrative and operational procedures. The process also included the review of both volunteer and child case files currently maintained at the County program office.

The administrative responsibilities of the County Juvenile Court regarding the Foster Care Review Board are minimal. The team completed an administrative review to ascertain basic compliance with dependency requirements in so far as the Court's responsibility for the FCRB.

## **Court Improvement Program**

<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>92%</b>

Significant changes in the Arizona laws governing the Court's management of the cases of abused and neglected children went into effect January 1, 1999. With the adoption of the current dependency process, the operational review process was initiated to assess each county Court's effectiveness in implementing and maintaining the new standards. Ongoing technical assistance can be offered by the statewide Court Improvement Program in addressing recommendations made as a result of the operational review.

Preliminary information for this operational review was acquired through an IIR completed by the Court prior to the on-site review. The operational review team later gathered information through work on site in the Court utilizing courtroom observation, case file review, interviews with court staff, and the administration of a short survey for participants in the dependency process. The review team extends its gratitude for the efforts of all Court staff involved in the review process.

The Court Improvement portion of this report is divided into the following sections:

- Operational Review Survey
- JOLTS Reporting
- Budgetary Considerations
- Reporting, Record Retention
- Equipment and JOLTS
- General Implementation Procedures
- Courtroom Observation
- File Review
- Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans.

"Key" requirements are those identified as crucial to the successful completion of the relevant court proceeding and, thus, these requirements have been weighted in the calculation of compliance. The number of requirements considered refers to the number of requirements upon which the county's compliance was assessed. The results of the Operational Review Survey and the JOLTS reporting measures were not included in the calculation of compliance.


## **Operational Review Survey**

Those participating in the administration of the dependency process through the Court in Jackson County were asked to complete a short survey of 18 questions, 11 of which addressed Court Improvement issues. The job duties as identified by the 16 respondents were: Hearing Officer, 2; Attorney (AAG), 1; Attorney (Court Appt), 3; Court Admin., 1; Case Manager, 3; CASA, 3; FCRB, 3. The following table denotes the averaged response for each of the subject areas which addressed Court Improvement issues.

	Subject	Very True	Mostly True	Seldom True	Never True	Don't Know
1.	Enough court time is available for the presentation of evidence and the making of arguments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Attorneys / parties utilize available court time to present witnesses, introduce evidence, and make pertinent legal arguments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Court caseload size and resource limitations have no effect on judicial performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The information available in the form of agency reports is adequate and of good quality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	The court has a working relationship with the applicable tribal court systems.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Appeals of orders for the termination of parental rights have little effect on the timely finalization of adoptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Adequate legal representation is always available to parents.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Appropriate educational assessments and services are provided for involved children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Appropriate physical health assessments and services are provided for involved children.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Appropriate mental health assessments and services are provided for involved children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Children receive legal counsel (attorney or Guardian ad Litem) in advance of the Preliminary Protective Hearing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **JOLTS Reporting**

Through utilization of dependency case information entered by each county into the Juvenile Online Tracking System, several reports have been made available by staff at the Administrative Office of the Courts. With the eventual development and use of quality assurance reporting, staff at the AOC have assisted the counties in data preparation and clean up. Each county has had the opportunity to research and address any reporting anomalies that may have existed regarding information entered for FY03.

	The following JOLTS reporting data is recorded in this section of the operational review report as it is related to general dependency measures. Additional JOLTS reporting specific to areas within this report are addressed in the appropriate sections.		
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results	
SRPDEP010	<b>Number of Children with Open Dependency Petitions</b> – the total number of children who are the subject of an open dependency petition as of the end of FY03 (6/30/03).	7 children 7 open petitions	
SRPDEP005	<b>Average Length of Stay in System</b> – based on the date that the child(ren) was initially removed from the home and the date that their case was closed during the requested period (FY03).	162 days	
SRPDEP007	<b>Juveniles With a Dependency and Have a Delinquency Either Currently or Historically</b> - List of juveniles with both delinquency and dependency activity pursuant to ARS 8-271. Juveniles who have been found to be dependent or are temporarily subject to court jurisdiction pending an adjudication of a dependency petition <i>and</i> are alleged or found to have committed a delinquent or incorrigible act during the requested period (FY03). Current delinquency actions are Intensive Probation, Standard Probation or currently as a pending delinquent complaint.	3 children	
SRPDEP008a	<b>Petitions Filed for a Period</b> – the number of petitions filed during the requested period (FY03).	# Petitions	# Children
		6	6
SRPDEP011	<b>Private Petitions Filed for a Period</b> – for requested period (FY03)	0 Private Petitions	



## **Budgetary Considerations**

Upon approval of the annual Funding Agreement (FA), funds are disbursed to the Court throughout the fiscal year. This funding process is intended to support the Court's efforts to successfully process dependency cases in the county. The county's efforts were assessed for the entire FY03 and the period to date in FY04.

<b>Number of requirements considered</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements*</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>100%</b>

Findings:

1. Funds disbursed to the court were deposited into a special revenue account pursuant to the FA.\*
2. Interest earned on the monies disbursed to the court was accrued to the fund.
3. Unencumbered funds were returned to the AOC in a timely manner at the close of the applicable fiscal year.\*
4. The court expended the funds for the purposes stated in the Court Improvement Plan and Addendum A.\*
5. The court did not shift funds from, to or within budgeted categories without prior written authorization from the AOC.

## **Reporting, Record Retention**

The Court is required to provide progress reports to the state office on a regular basis. The Court is also to follow requirements regarding its retention of records and ensure that subcontractors follow retention requirements. The county's efforts were assessed for the entire FY03 and the period to date in FY04.

<b>Number of requirements considered</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements*</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>98%</b>

Findings:

1. The court submitted all of the required interim progress reports for FY03 and thus far in FY04, although one of the reports in FY03 was submitted after the due date.\*
2. The court submitted a timely final progress report for FY03.\*

3. The court maintains and provides to the AOC reports, data and statistics as required. The court retains all financial records, applicable program records, and data related to the approved plan for a period of at least 5 years.
4. The court retains all records and other documents relevant to the funding agreement for a period of five years after final payment has been made.\*

## **Equipment, JOLTS**

The FA contains requirements relating to the use of the Juvenile Online Tracking System (JOLTS). The Court is also subject to requirements for all equipment whose purchase was made through the use of Court Improvement monies, including relevant computer equipment utilized for JOLTS data entry.

<b>Number of requirements considered</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements*</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Findings:

1. A listing of the equipment purchased with funds pursuant to the FA has been provided by the county and is represented in Appendix A, *Court Improvement Equipment Inventory*.
2. Dependency JOLTS has been installed in the court and is accessible to all appropriate court personnel.\*
3. John Dietz has been identified as the court employee responsible for the input of data into dependency JOLTS.\*
4. A representative from the court participated in all JOLTS Users Group meetings during FY03 and thus far in FY04.
5. The court has provided all equipment, hardware and software to enable applicable court personnel to access and utilize JOLTS. The court has established a security matrix to determine who is to have access to JOLTS and what level of access these users may have.
6. Dependency data is entered on a daily basis.\*

## **General Implementation Procedure**

The Court has been very successful in efforts to implement and maintain dependency case processing. In the Funding Agreement signed by the Court prior to the start of each fiscal year, the Court agrees to address key requirements related to the successful implementation of dependency case processing.

<b>Number of total requirements considered</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements*</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>92%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. There are sufficient judicial officers to hear all dependency matters within the appropriate time frames.\*
2. All applicable judicial officers have attended the required dependency training.\*
3. The Court utilizes Frederick Michaels as the facilitator for Pre-Hearing Conferences. The facilitator reports verbally to the court regarding the agreements and also provides a completed “PPC checklist” to the court.\*
4. The Court utilizes Frederick Michaels as the mediator for those applicable issues.\*
5. The Court Clerk’s office is adequately staffed/equipped to manage its dependency responsibilities.\*
6. The following individuals were identified as members of the Jackson County Court Improvement Implementation Team as of December 2003:
  - Honorable Pat J. Johnson, Presiding Juvenile Court Judge;
  - Carol Adams, Juvenile Court Administrator;
  - Carmen Carbone, Court Clerk;
  - Frederick Michaels, Facilitator / Mediator;
  - John Dietz, JOLTS Data Entry Clerk;
  - Cynthia P. Stewart, Child Protective Services;
  - Alison A. Gamez, Assistant Attorney General.
7. The Court has not compiled a manual to be used by personnel regarding procedures for the dependency process.
8. The Court reported that attorneys are assigned to the relevant dependency cases directly by the court and that matters of conflict are considered when making these appointments.

## **Courtroom Observation**

<b>Courtroom Observation – Overall Compliance</b>	
<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>90%</b>

A portion of the information gathered for the review regarding implementation of the dependency process came through the observation of hearings in the courtroom setting. The review team observed a number of hearings in the courtrooms of the two judicial officers who are assigned dependency matters in Jackson County. Please refer to Appendix B, *Courtroom Observation Completed*, for a listing of those hearings observed.

The Court's compliance is noted in two ways for each type of dependency hearing:

- Success in addressing “key” requirements;
- Success in addressing the remainder of the requirements.

The “key” requirements are identified at the start of each section. Because key requirements are crucial to the successful completion of the relevant Court proceeding, these requirements have been weighted in the calculation of compliance. Certain requirements are repeated in different types of dependency proceedings. If different dependency proceedings occurred simultaneously, like items were counted only once.

The Findings below include measures rating compliance for each of the different types of hearings observed. For further findings, please refer to the following:

- Detailed listing of all courtroom observation requirements utilized by the review team, please refer to the Operational Review Client Guide located online at <http://supreme.state.az.us/dcsd/improve/client.pdf>;
- Items where significant exceptions (<90% compliance) have contributed to lower compliance ratings, refer to Appendix C, *Courtroom Observation Compliance Exceptions*;
- Discrepancies noted between the hearings observed versus each minute entry that was subsequently issued by the Court are noted in Appendix D, *Courtroom Observation – Minute Entry Exceptions*;
- Percentage of the time that interested parties are in attendance at hearings observed, refer to Appendix G, *Interested Party Attendance at Court Hearings, Courtroom Observation*.

**Pre-Hearing Conference (PHC)** – This is to be facilitated by an individual appointed by the Court who is neither a party nor a representative of a party to the case. In the PHC, agreement is sought on issues of custody, placement, visitation and reunification services.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>97%</b>

The key PHC requirements focus on the facilitator's attempts to reach agreement on:

- The placement of the child;
- Visitation between the parent(s) and the child(ren);
- Services to be provided to the child and family to facilitate reunification.

**Preliminary Protective Hearing (PPH)** – The Court determines whether continued temporary custody of the child is necessary. The Court enters appropriate orders as to custody, placement, visitation and the provisions of services to the child and family. This hearing is typically held within five to seven days of the child's removal from the home.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>84%</b>

The key requirements for the PPH focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Give an opportunity for the parent(s), guardian, Indian custodian, or any other person with relevant knowledge to provide relevant testimony;
- Give paramount consideration to the health and safety of the child(ren);
- Determine whether the tasks set forth in the case plan are reasonable and necessary to carry out the case plan goal;
- Enter orders regarding placement and visitation pending the determination of dependency;
- Determine if reasonable efforts were made or whether it was reasonable to make no efforts to prevent the removal of the child(ren) from the home;
- Provide a factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination;
- Determine whether services are available that would eliminate the need for the child's continued removal from the home.

**Review of Temporary Custody (RTC)** – If requested by a parent, guardian or Indian custodian, the court is to conduct a review of temporary custody to determine whether removal of the child was necessary and whether the child should remain in out-of-home placement. Because the Court is required to make the determination at the PPH whether continued temporary custody is required to prevent abuse or neglect, this hearing is to be completed before completion of the PPH.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>0</b>
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**Initial Dependency Hearing (IDH)** – The Court determines whether service has been completed and whether the parent, guardian or Indian custodian admits, denies or does not contest the allegations contained in the dependency petition. If the parent(s), guardian or Indian custodian is present, this hearing is to be held in conjunction with the PPH. If the party is not present, the hearing is typically held within twenty-one days of the filing of the petition or no sooner than ten days following the completion of service.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>82%</b>

The key requirements of the IDH focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service of process had been completed or waived as to each party;
- Give an opportunity for the parent(s), guardian or Indian custodian to enter a plea as to the allegations contained in the dependency petition;
- Determine whether reasonable efforts were made to prevent or eliminate the need for the child(ren)'s removal from the home;
- Determine whether services are available that would eliminate the need for the child's continued removal from the home.

**Settlement Conference (SET)** - A SET may be held for the purpose of identifying and resolving issues in a non-adversarial manner. It was reported in the Court's response to the IIR that, if there is a point where agreement cannot be reached, mediation is chosen as the form of alternative dispute resolution.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>0</b>
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**Pretrial Conference (PTC)** - A PTC may be held prior to dependency adjudication to determine whether the parties are prepared and intend to proceed to trial or whether resolution of remaining issues is possible and to address any issues raised by the parties. Counsel shall meet with their clients prior to the conference.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>Na</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>83%</b>

**Dependency Adjudication Hearing (ADJ)** – The Court determines whether the petitioner has met the burden of proof regarding the child’s dependency. If agreement is reached at the time of the SET, the Court can proceed with the ADJ at that time.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>93%</b>

The key requirements of the ADJ focus on the Court’s efforts to:

- Find that it has jurisdiction over the subject matter and the persons before it if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Find that there is a factual basis for the dependency if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Find that the child is dependent if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Determine whether the party understands the rights being waived if an admission or no contest plea is entered;
- Determine whether the plea is made knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily;
- Determine whether a factual basis exists to support a finding of dependency if an admission or no contest plea is entered;
- Adjudicate the child dependent if the allegations are found true or are admitted to/not contested;
- Enter orders regarding placement and custody of the child(ren) if the allegations are found true or are admitted to/not contested.

**Disposition Hearing (DIS)** – The Court determines the appropriate case plan, services and placement of a child who has been adjudicated dependent. The Court is required to hold the DIS either in conjunction with or within 30 days of the completion of the ADJ.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>98%</b>

The key requirements of the DIS focus on the Court’s efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Enter orders regarding the services required to achieve the case plan;
- Enter orders regarding the placement and custody of the child(ren).

**Periodic Review Hearing (REV)** – The Court reviews the progress of the parties in achieving the case plan goals and determines whether the child continues to be dependent. The REV is to occur no more than six months after the completion of the DIS and at least once every six months thereafter.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>

The key requirements of the REV focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Make the finding of fact that the child continues to be dependent.

**Permanency Hearing (PER)** – The Court determines the appropriate permanent plan for the child and enter such orders as may be necessary to accomplish the plan within a specific time frame. This hearing is to be held within one year of the child's removal from the home. If there is a delay in the completion of this hearing, the Court must ensure that a finding is made within twelve months of the child(ren)'s removal which sets a factual basis as to whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to implement the permanency plan.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>99%</b>

The key requirements of the PER focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Consider evidence from all parties in the form of testimony, documents entered into evidence, and the final plan prepared by the agency;
- Determine whether the agency made reasonable efforts to finalize permanency plan;
- Set forth in writing the factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination.

**Initial Guardianship Hearing (IGU)** – The Court determines if service has been completed, whether proper notice has been provided to the appropriate parties and whether the parent, guardian or Indian custodian admits, denies or does not contest the allegations contained in the motion for guardianship. This hearing is to be held within thirty days of the PER.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>

The key requirements of the IGU focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service is either completed or waived;
- Determine whether the parent admits/does not contest or denies the allegations set forth in the guardianship motion.

**Guardianship Adjudication Hearing (GUA)** – The Court determines whether the prospective guardian is a fit and proper person to become the permanent guardian of the child and whether guardianship is in the best interest of the child. This hearing is typically to be



held within 90 days of the PER but may be continued if the best interests of the child are not compromised.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>79%</b>

The key requirements of the GUA focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Give primary consideration to the physical, mental and emotional needs of the child in determining whether to grant the guardianship motion;

**Initial Termination Hearing (ITE)** – The Court determines whether service is complete and whether the parent admits/does not contest or denies the allegations contained in the motion or petition for termination of parental rights. This hearing is to occur within 30 days of the PER and no sooner than ten days following completion of service of the petition.

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>86%</b>

The key requirements of the ITE focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service has been completed or waived;
- Determine whether the parent admits/does not contest or denies the allegations in the motion or petition for termination.

**Termination Adjudication Hearing (TER)** – The Court determines whether the moving party or petitioner has met the burden of proof regarding grounds to terminate the parental rights and whether termination is in the best interests of the child. This hearing is to be held within 90 days of the PER but can be continued under “extraordinary circumstances.”

<b>Number of hearings observed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>

The key requirements of the ITE focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Make specific findings of fact in support of termination and grant the motion for termination of parental rights if the petitioner has met the burden of proof;
- Appoint a guardian for the child/appoint a guardian for the child and vest legal custody in another person or authorized agency if petitioner met the burden of proof;
- Enter orders for financial support of the child if the petitioner met the burden of proof;
- Set/reaffirm the dependency review hearing if petitioner met the burden of proof;
- If ICWA, make findings pursuant to the standards if petitioner met burden of proof.

## **Case File Review**

The review team considered 11 case files in their review of Court documentation of past dependency proceedings. Cases were selected in which the child in question was removed from the home on or after 1/1/99. Please refer to Appendix E, *Court Case Files Reviewed* for a listing of those files considered by the team.

<b>Case File Review – Overall Compliance</b>	
<b>Number of files reviewed</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Number of hearing types reviewed</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>86%</b>

The Court's compliance is noted in two ways for each of the various types of dependency hearings:

- Success in addressing “key” requirements;
- Success in addressing the remainder of the requirements.

The “key” requirements are identified at the start of each section. Because key requirements are crucial to the successful completion of the relevant Court proceeding, these requirements have been weighted in the calculation of compliance. Certain requirements are repeated in different types of dependency proceedings. If different dependency proceedings occurred simultaneously, like items were counted only once.

The Findings below include measures rating compliance for each of the different types of hearings reviewed. For specific requirements and/or findings, please refer to the following:


- For a detailed listing of all hearing requirements utilized by the review team, see the Op Review Client Guide at <http://www.supreme.state.az.us/dcsd/improve/client04.pdf>;
- Items where significant exceptions have contributed to lower compliance ratings, refer to Appendix F, *Court Case File Exceptions*;
- Percentage of the time that various interested parties are in attendance at hearings observed, refer to Appendix G, *Interested Party Attendance at Court Hearings, Court Case Files*.

**Preliminary Protective Hearing (PPH)** – The Court determines whether continued temporary custody of the child is necessary. The Court enters appropriate orders as to custody, placement, visitation and the provisions of services to the child and family. This hearing is typically held within five to seven days of the child’s removal from the home.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Average number of court days after removal (excluding privately filed petitions)</b>	<b>10</b>

The key requirements for the PPH focus on the Court’s efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Give an opportunity for the parent(s), guardian, Indian custodian, or any other person with relevant knowledge to provide relevant testimony;
- Give paramount consideration to the health and safety of the child(ren);
- Determine whether the tasks set forth in the case plan are reasonable and necessary to carry out the case plan goal;
- Enter orders regarding placement and visitation pending dependency determination;
- Determine if reasonable efforts were made or whether it was reasonable to make no efforts to prevent the removal of the child(ren) from the home;
- Provide a factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination;
- Determine whether services are available that would eliminate the need for the child’s continued removal from the home.

	JOLTS reporting was available noting the percentage of cases that were seen within the statutory time frame.	
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results
SRPDEP002	<b>Percent of Petitions Meeting PPH Within 5 to 7 Days</b> – relevant hearings held within the statutorily required time frame, considering those petitions filed within the reporting period (FY03).	83%

**Initial Dependency Hearing (IDH)** – The Court determines whether service has been completed and whether the parent, guardian or Indian custodian admits, denies or does not contest the allegations contained in the dependency petition. If the parent(s), guardian or Indian custodian is present, this hearing is to be held in conjunction with the PPH. If the party is not present, the hearing is typically held within twenty-one days of the filing of the petition or no sooner than ten days following the completion of service.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Average number of days from petition filing (first IDH minute entry reviewed in case file)</b>	<b>11</b>

The key requirements of the IDH focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service of process had been completed or waived as to each party;
- Give an opportunity for the parent(s), guardian or Indian custodian to enter a plea as to the allegations contained in the dependency petition;
- Determine whether reasonable efforts were made to prevent or eliminate the need for the child(ren)'s removal from the home;
- Determine whether services are available to eliminate need for continued removal.

**Settlement Conference (SET)** - A SET may be held for the purpose of identifying and resolving issues in a non-adversarial manner. The Court has not historically utilized SET as a form of alternate dispute resolution and, therefore, no such minute entries were reviewed.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>63%</b>

**Pretrial Conference (PTC)** - A PTC may be held prior to dependency adjudication to determine whether the parties are prepared and intend to proceed to trial or whether resolution of remaining issues is possible and to address any issues raised by the parties. Counsel shall meet with their clients prior to the conference


<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>0</b>
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**Dependency Adjudication Hearing (ADJ)** – The Court determines whether the petitioner has met the burden of proving the child dependent.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Average number of court days from removal to first ADJ</b>	<b>35</b>

The key requirements of the ADJ focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Find that it has jurisdiction over the subject matter and the persons before it if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Find that there is a factual basis for the dependency if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Find that the child is dependent if the allegations are contested and are found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence;
- Determine whether the party understands the rights being waived if an admission or no contest plea is entered;
- Determine whether the plea is made knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily if an admission or no contest plea is entered;
- Determine whether a factual basis exists to support a finding of dependency if an admission or no contest plea is entered;
- Adjudicate the child dependent if the allegations are found true or are admitted to/not contested;
- Enter orders regarding placement and custody of the child(ren) if the allegations are found true or are admitted to/not contested.

	JOLTS reporting was available noting the number of days that passed before the first finding of dependency in the subject cases.	
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results
SRPDEP001	<b>Average Number of Days to First Dependency Finding</b> – considering the time elapsed between the date of the child's removal from the home to the date of dependency being found as to the first parent. Reporting for requested period (FY03).	35 days

**Disposition Hearing (DIS)** – The Court determines the appropriate case plan, services and placement of a child who has been adjudicated dependent. The Court is required to hold the DIS either in conjunction with or within 30 days of the completion of the ADJ.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Hearing held at ADJ or within 30 days</b>	<b>50%</b>

The key requirements of the DIS focus on the court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Enter orders regarding the services required to achieve the case plan;
- Enter orders regarding the placement and custody of the child(ren).

**Periodic Review Hearing (REV)** – The Court reviews the progress of the parties in achieving the case plan goals and determines whether the child continues to be dependent. The REV is to occur no more than six months after the completion of the DIS and at least once every six months thereafter.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>86%</b>

The key requirements of the REV focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Make the finding of fact that the child continues to be dependent.


**Permanency Hearing (PER)** – The Court determines the appropriate permanent plan for the child and enter such orders as may be necessary to accomplish the plan within a specific time frame. This hearing is to be held within one year of the child's removal from the home. If there is a delay in the completion of this hearing, the Court must ensure that a finding is made within twelve months of the child(ren)'s removal which sets a factual basis as to whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to implement the permanency plan.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Compliance on key requirements</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Compliance on all requirements</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Average number of months from removal</b>	<b>342</b>

The key requirements of the PER focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Consider evidence from all parties;

- Determine whether agency has made reasonable efforts to finalize permanency plan;
- Set forth in writing the factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination.

	JOLTS reporting was available noting the number of days that passed before the first finding of dependency in the subject cases.		
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results	
SRPDEP003	<b>Percent of Petitions in which a Permanent Plan was Initiated Within 12 Months of Initial Date</b> – County of juveniles with the percentage of petitions in which the permanency plan was entered within 12 months of the child coming into care. Reporting for the period of 1/1/03 to 6/30/03.	% Petitions	Total Children
		100%	14

**Initial Guardianship Hearing (IGU)** – The Court determines if service has been completed, whether proper notice has been provided to the appropriate parties and whether the parent, guardian or Indian custodian admits, denies or does not contest the allegations contained in the motion for guardianship. This hearing is to be held within thirty days of PER.

Number of hearings reviewed	0
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The key requirements of the IGU focus on the Court's efforts to:


- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service is either completed or waived;
- Determine whether the parent admits/does not contest or denies the allegations set forth in the guardianship motion.

**Guardianship Adjudication Hearing (GUA)** – The Court determines whether the prospective guardian is a fit and proper person to become the permanent guardian of the child and whether guardianship is in the best interest of the child. Held within 90 days of PER.

Number of hearings reviewed	0
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The key requirements of the GUA focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Give primary consideration to the physical, mental and emotional needs of the child in determining whether to grant the guardianship motion.

	JOLTS reporting was available noting the number of days that elapsed between the court's order for the Guardianship motion to be filed and the court's order regarding this motion.		
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results	
SRPDEP006	<b>Days to ruling guardianship motions</b> – List of juveniles with average # of business days from motion request date to motion result date. Reporting for requested period (FY03).	89 days	

**Initial Termination Hearing (ITE)** – The Court determines whether service is complete and whether the parent admits/does not contest or denies the allegations contained in the motion or petition for termination of parental rights. This hearing is to occur within 30 days of the PER and no sooner than ten days following completion of service of the petition.

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>0</b>
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The key requirements of the ITE focus on the Court's efforts to:


- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Determine whether service has been completed or waived;
- Determine parent's plea regarding the motion or petition for termination.

**Termination Adjudication Hearing (TER)** – The Court determines whether the moving party or petitioner has met the burden of proof regarding the grounds to terminate the parental rights and whether termination is in the best interests of the child. This hearing is to be held within 90 days of the PER but can be continued under "extraordinary circumstances."

<b>Number of hearings reviewed</b>	<b>0</b>
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The key requirements of the ITE focus on the Court's efforts to:

- Hold the hearing within the required time frame;
- Make specific findings of fact in support of termination and grant the motion for termination of parental rights if the petitioner has met the burden of proof;
- Appoint a guardian for the child or appoint a guardian for the child and vest legal custody in another person or authorized agency if the petitioner has met the burden of proof;
- Enter orders for financial support of child if the petitioner has met the burden of proof;
- Set or reaffirm the dependency review hearing if the petitioner has met the burden of proof;
- If ICWA, make findings pursuant to standards if petitioner has met burden of proof.

	<b>JOLTS reporting was available noting the number of days that elapsed between the court's order for the Termination motion to be filed and the court's order regarding this motion.</b>	
Reference	Title – Explanation of Report	Results
SRPDEP006	<b>Days to ruling termination motions</b> – List of juveniles with average # of business days from motion request date to motion result date. Reporting for requested period (FY03).	89 days



## **Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans - CIP**

Based upon the findings, the team made the following recommendations (noted as R1, R2, etc). Upon review of the team's findings and recommendations, the Court submitted comments and corrective action plans (noted as CAP1, CAP2, etc). The Court's comments were included in the body of the report and are attached to the report as Appendix K, *Court Response to Recommendations*.

**R1:** The team recommends that the Court compile and make available to applicable court staff a manual detailing the steps needed to address dependency case processing.

**CAP1:** Court personnel have obtained a copy of a neighboring County's dependency process manual and are in the process of adapting this manual to our specific procedures. This manual should be available for use by all dependency personnel within one month.

**R2:** The team recommends that the Court address the requirements for each of the different types of hearings to ensure compliance with statute and rule.

**CAP2:** The Court will continue to utilize the Juvenile Benchbook in order to ensure that all hearing requirements are addressed consistently. The Court will ensure that each hearing officer is familiar with this requirement.

**R3:** The team recommends that the Court continue to collaborate with personnel from the Clerk's Office to ensure that all requirements are address in minute entries for the various dependency hearings.

**CAP4:** The county coordinator will continue to provide regular training opportunities for all CASA volunteers. The county coordinator has also begun communicating more frequently with those in the community who might be able to provide more frequent training for CASA volunteers.

## **Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program**

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>97%</b>

The review of the Jackson County CASA program relied upon information gathered from the State Program Office as well as the County program office. The review team appreciates the active efforts made by County personnel to assist in the review of the Jackson County CASA Program.

The Jackson County CASA Program office maintains an office in the Jackson County Court facility. The concerted efforts of the County program staff and CASA volunteers continue to contribute to the success of the County program.

Information for the review was acquired, at first, through an “Initial Information Request” (IIR) completed by County staff. While in Jackson County, the team collected information through interviews with County staff and the review of case and volunteer files.

The operational review of the Jackson County CASA Program was based on requirements spelled out in Arizona Revised Statute (ARS), the Arizona Code of Judicial Administration (ACJA), the Rules of Procedure for the Juvenile Court (Rules), Administrative Orders (AO), the CASA Policy Manual (Policy), and the CASA Coordinator’s Manual (Manual).

The CASA portion of this report is divided into the following sections:

- Operational Review Survey;
- Program Plan and Financial Management;
- County Program Operations;
- Certification Screening Elements;
- Training;
- File Management – Dependency Case & Volunteer Files;
- Personnel;
- Volunteer Complaint Process;
- County Staff Qualifications;
- County Staff Minimum Performance Standards;
- Volunteer Status;
- Volunteer Minimum Performance Standards;
- Volunteer Mentor Minimum Performance Standards;
- Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans.

## **Operational Review Survey**

Those participating in the administration of the dependency process through the Court in Jackson County were asked to complete a short survey of 18 questions, 4 of which addressed CASA issues. The job duties as identified by the 16 respondents were: Hearing Officer, 2; Attorney (AAG), 1; Attorney (Court Appt), 3; Court Admin., 1; Case Manager, 3; CASA, 3; FCRB, 3. The following table denotes the averaged response for each of the subject areas related to CASA issues.

	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Very True</b>	<b>Mostly True</b>	<b>Seldom True</b>	<b>Never True</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
12.	The information available in the form of CASA reports is adequate and of good quality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	CASA reports are available in a timely manner for consideration prior to the scheduled hearing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	CASA volunteers openly advocate for their assigned children.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	CASA volunteers make appreciable differences in the cases for which they are assigned (compared to cases with no CASA assignment).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Program Plan and Financial Management**

Pursuant to ARS § 8-524, ACJA 7-101(F)(1)(a), and Policy, the County is to address several requirements relating to the annual Program Plan and management of monies relating to Budget Request.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>88%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. The County submitted all of the required Quarterly Progress Reports in a timely manner for FY03 and thus far in FY04.
2. The County submitted 5 of the 6 required Quarterly Financial Report for FY03 and FY04 in a timely manner. The County did not submit the Quarterly Financial Report due 4/30/03 in a timely manner.
3. The County submitted the Closing Financial Statement for FY03 in a timely manner.
4. The county coordinator does not yet have on-site access to DCATS and has been working with staff at the state program office to maintain DCATS reporting requirements via phone.
5. Funding is provided on a ratio of one coordinator supervisor for every ten county

coordinators, one county coordinator for every 40 active volunteers, and one county support staff for no less than two FTE county coordinator positions. The County is currently funded for a .25 FTE coordinator position with the goal maintaining 10 active CASA volunteers. There are currently 9 active CASA volunteers in Jackson County.

### **County Program Operations**

Pursuant to Code (ACJA 7-101(G)) and Policy, the County is to address several requirements relating to the appointment of CASA volunteers and the maintenance and access to file information.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. Priority is given to CASA volunteer assignment in juvenile dependency matters over juvenile delinquency or incorrigibility matters.
2. Appropriate screening of cases is completed prior to assignment.
3. The county program staff adhere to Policy requirements regarding requests from outside individuals or agencies to view case or volunteer file information.
4. It is the county program office's practice that, upon leaving the program, CASA volunteers return identification badges and all case related information.
5. County program staff report adherence to electronic communications policies.
6. CASA volunteers are not assigned to more than two cases at one time.
7. The County reports that program performance manuals are current and maintained in the county program office.
8. The County reports on efforts to provide ongoing recognition of CASA volunteers.

## **Certification Screening Elements**

Pursuant to Code (ACJA 7-101 (H), (L)), CASA volunteers must meet specific qualifications to be considered for appointment to cases.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>92%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. Proof of citizenship was found in seven of the nine CASA volunteer files reviewed.
2. Although one of the CASA volunteers was employed by ADES at the time of application, no specific authorization by the presiding judge or designee was found in the file.
3. All CASA volunteers were at least 21 years of age at the time of application.
4. All CASA volunteer files contained documentation of the applicable polygraph examination completed.

Refer to Appendix H, *CASA Volunteer Files – Missing / Incomplete Information* for listing of specific information not found in file.

## **Training**

Pursuant to Policy (County program Operations, CASA Graphic Standards, Training) the County program has several responsibilities regarding the marketing to and training of prospective and current CASA volunteers.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Overall % compliance (FY02)</b>	<b>91%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. All new program staff have:
  - a. attended New Staff Orientation Training;
  - b. attended the volunteer Orientation Training;
  - c. observed a Pre-hearing Conference, Preliminary Protective Hearing, and a Review Hearing;
  - d. observed an FCRB meeting unless one was not scheduled during the training period;
  - e. attended a case management staffing with CPS;
  - f. completed annual COJET requirements thus far.
2. New County program staff have received the training required regarding ethics and confidentiality.

3. New County program staff have reviewed the required ACJIS video.
4. According to DCATS reporting, 4 of the 9 active CASA volunteers completed the required training prior to their appointment to their first case.
5. According to DCATS reporting, 3 of the 9 active CASA volunteers met their training requirement for FY03.
6. Training was conducted both before and after volunteer Orientation Training.
7. Pursuant to requirements regarding recruitment and marketing information, the County reported that:
  - a. they inform the state program office of such information that they wish to prepare for distribution if not previously approved by either state program office or National CASA;
  - b. it is their policy to forward to the state program office all such materials;
  - c. all such materials contain either the Arizona or National CASA logo.

### **File Management – Dependency Case Files**

Pursuant to Policy, the County program staff have several responsibilities relating to the assessment of potential new cases and the creation and maintenance of case files.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>95%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. County program staff have developed duplicate files for each case, one of which is reportedly presented to the volunteer upon assignment and the other of which is maintained in the office.
2. Orders of appointment of CASA volunteers and, when applicable, orders rescinding appointment, were located in all open case files.
3. Copies of the appropriate Legal Party Memo were located in the open case files in 8 of the 9 (89%) applicable case files.
4. Pertinent documents (ie CPS and FCRB reports, various court documentation) were located in all of the files reviewed.
5. CASA volunteers are required to submit monthly Contact Logs for each of their case assignments, however, only 73% of the required Contact Logs were located.
6. Court report documentation was located in all of the applicable case files.
7. Documentation was available noting that applicable program files had been returned.

8. All CASA related documentation from dismissed cases is retained for five years from the date of case dismissal.

Refer to Appendix H, *CASA Case Files – Missing / Incomplete Information*, for a listing of those files reviewed and for those specific items not located in the files reviewed.

### **File Management – Volunteer Files**

Pursuant to Policy, County program staff are responsible for maintaining appropriate documentation in each CASA volunteer's file. The team reviewed 9 CASA volunteer files for the abovementioned information.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>89%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. Completed applications were located in each of the files reviewed.
2. Signed Acknowledgement forms were found in 8 of the 9 files reviewed.
3. Completed Pre-screening Criteria forms were located in each of the files reviewed.
4. Documentation of a personal interview with the county coordinator was found in 8 of the 9 files reviewed.
5. Three personal, non-relative references were located in each of the files reviewed.
6. Results from state background checks were found in each of the files reviewed.
7. Results from national background checks, or applicable affidavit, were located in each of the files reviewed.
8. A copy of a volunteer performance assessment was located in all applicable files.
9. A duplicate of the CASA volunteer's identification badge was located in 1 of the 9 (11%) files reviewed.
10. When a CASA volunteer exits the program, their file is retained for five years from their date of exit.

Please refer to Appendix I, *CASA Volunteer Files – Missing / Incomplete Information* for a listing of these files.

## **Personnel**

Pursuant to Policy, maintenance of personnel records for and performance evaluation procedures of county program staff must address specific requirements.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. Personnel records of county program staff are maintained in accord with local court and county personnel policies.
2. The county coordinator only recently assumed the position and, therefore, an assessment of job performance has not yet been completed nor has any disciplinary issue yet to arise.

## **Volunteer Complaint Process**

Pursuant to Policy, specific requirements must be addressed in the handling of complaints and/or investigations relating to a CASA volunteer.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Findings:**

1. It is the county policy that the county coordinator is notified (by judicial officers, state program staff, other county program staff) in the event of a CASA volunteer violating statute, Rules, Administrative Order, ACJA or Policies.
2. It is county policy that complaints of such violations are made in writing and contain sufficient information to warrant further investigation and the name and phone number of the complainant.
3. It is county policy that the results of any investigation into such complaints are reported to the manager (State Program Director), the presiding judge or designee, and the county coordinator.
4. It is county policy that the investigator present his/her findings and recommendations to the presiding juvenile judge for resolution of the complaint and the manager and the county coordinator then be informed of the resolution.
5. It is county policy that, if the complaint involved criminal activity, the investigator will forward the complaint and all other investigative reports to the presiding juvenile judge or designee, the manager and the county coordinator.



6. It is county policy that the county coordinator document any complaints in the CASA volunteer's file and forward a copy to the state program office.

### **County Staff Qualifications**

Pursuant to Policy, county program staff are to meet specific qualifications to attain employment in the applicable position.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>66%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. The county coordinator (.25 FTE) is the only staff in the county program office.
2. The county coordinator has a BS from an accredited college or university or four years' equivalent work experience in a related field with demonstrated ability.
3. The county coordinator does not have at least one year experience in the juvenile court and/or child welfare system.
4. The county coordinator completed to a satisfactory degree a security clearance which included state and federal background checks and any applicable county required certification.

### **County Staff Minimum Performance Standards**

Pursuant to Policy, county coordinators are required to perform several administrative duties.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>96%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. The county coordinator maintains a recruitment plan consistent with county's goal.
2. The county coordinator, or county representative, was in attendance at 3 of the 4 administrative meetings during FY03 and 2 of the 3 held thus far in FY04.
3. The county coordinator has attended the designated administrative training as required by the state program office.
4. The county coordinator maintains / documents monthly supervision with volunteers.
5. The county coordinator provides training to CASA volunteers on specific case documents to better prepare them for case assignments.

6. The county coordinator provides training to CASA volunteers on court report writing.
7. The county coordinator reviews CASA volunteer court reports where appropriate and edits their reports / recommendations with the knowledge of the CASA volunteers.
8. The county coordinator attends judicial hearings, staffings, and FCRB meetings when informed that the assigned CASA volunteer would be absent.

### **Volunteer Status**

Pursuant to policy, a CASA volunteer's status is determined by one of several factors.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **Findings:**

Policy identifies different capacities in which CASA volunteers can participate in the county program and maintain an active status. All CASA volunteers registered with the county program were on active status and found to be involved in at least one of the required functions.

### **Volunteer Minimum Performance Standards**

Pursuant to Policy, specific requirements are set for CASA volunteers relating to reporting and tracking case related information.

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **Findings:**

1. Through court reports, CASA volunteers exhibit their efforts to gather and provide independent, factual information to aid the court in making decisions regarding each child's best interests and in determining whether reasonable efforts have been made regarding removal and reunification.
2. Through court reports, CASA volunteers exhibit their efforts to provide advocacy to ensure that appropriate case planning and served were provided for each child.
3. CASA volunteers maintain confidentiality in handling program or personnel issues and information.
4. Through court reports, CASA volunteers exhibit their efforts to review case records, maintain confidentiality, and interview appropriate parties involved in each child's case.
5. CASA volunteers develop and maintain relationships with each assigned child.

6. CASA volunteers communicate with care givers about each child's behavior and relationships.
7. CASA volunteers participate as members of each child's case management team.
8. CASA volunteers participate in the formulation of agreements, stipulations or case planning regarding each assigned child.
9. Through court reports, CASA volunteers exhibit their efforts to advocate for each child's best interests, identify service needs, and make recommendations to the court regarding the timely placement of the child.
10. CASA volunteers assist responsible parties to meet each child's educational needs.
11. CASA volunteers report to the appropriate authorities significant changes in family situations or violations of court orders.
12. CASA volunteers consult, at least monthly, with the county coordinator at least monthly and document this in the appropriate Contact Log.
13. CASA volunteers discuss all recommendations concerning the case with the county coordinator prior to submitting the recommendations to the court.
14. CASA volunteers submit an objective and concise court report in the time line provided by the county program office.
15. CASA volunteers attend all court hearings pertaining to the assigned case.
16. CASA volunteers assist the court in exploring alternative placements.
17. CASA volunteers make recommendations at FCRB meetings.
18. CASA volunteers maintain contact with the county coordinator to alert or to discuss high profile cases or problems as they arise.
19. CASA volunteers provide to the county program office a copy of all case related correspondence as directed by the county coordinator.
20. CASA volunteers decline requests to perform home studies.
21. CASA volunteers supervise/monitor and assist with visits.
22. CASA volunteers are not related to or employed with an agency that might have a conflict in their individual case.
23. CASA volunteers do not: provide legal or therapeutic counseling; arrange a child's placement; give gifts valued in excess of \$10 without the approval from the county

coordinator and the guardian ad litem.

## **Volunteer Mentor Minimum Performance Standards**

The county coordinator may assign an active volunteer as a mentor. This CASA volunteer must address several minimum performance standards to be in compliance with Policy.

### **Findings:**

There are no CASA volunteer mentors in the county program.

## **Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans – CASA**

Based upon the findings, the team made the following recommendations (noted as R1, R2, etc). Upon review of the team's findings and recommendations, the Court submitted comments and corrective action plans (noted as CAP1, CAP2, etc). The Court's comments were included in the body of the report and are attached to the report as Appendix K, *Court Response to Recommendations*.

**R4**: The team recommends that the county coordinator make continuing efforts to offer training opportunities and to document CASA volunteer training completed in DCATS.

**CAP4**: The county coordinator will continue to provide regular training opportunities for all CASA volunteers. The county coordinator has also begun communicating more frequently with those in the community who might be able to provide more frequent training for CASA volunteers.

**R5**: The team recommends that the county coordinator continue to work with CASA volunteers to ensure their timely submission of required Contact Logs.

**CAP5**: In addition to those procedures already in place, the county coordinator will begin to electronically prompt CASA volunteers regarding the timely submission of their Contact Logs. The county coordinator is also planning to address ways to improve performance in this area at their next event.

**R6**: The team recommends that the county coordinator ensure that appropriate documentation is maintained in both volunteer and case files.

**CAP6**: The county coordinator will continue to work with the county program staff to ensure that all appropriate documentation is retained in each volunteer and case file. The county coordinator will also use the review tools utilized by the team to perform occasional spot inspections on chosen files.

## Foster Care Review Board

<b>Number of elements reviewed</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Overall % compliance</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Foster Care Review Boards (FCRB) are required to review all dependency cases where the child resides out of the home within six months of the child's removal and every six months thereafter. Jackson County maintains one Board, GN01, which is responsible for reviewing the cases of the children who are subject to a dependency action. While volunteers from the county serve on the local boards, the administrative responsibility of the FCRB in Jackson County is handled by a program specialist from the FCRB Program Regional Office located in Tucson.

Pursuant to ARS §8-822, when a child is initially removed from the home, the case must be reviewed by a removal review team which is to include a member of the Foster Care Review Board. There is currently one removal review volunteer from Jackson County.

### **Operational Review Survey**

Those participating in the administration of the dependency process through the Court in Jackson County were asked to complete a short survey of 18 questions, 3 of which addressed FCRB issues. The job duties as identified by the 16 respondents were: Hearing Officer, 2; Attorney (AAG), 1; Attorney (Court Appt), 3; Court Admin., 1; Case Manager, 3; CASA, 3; FCRB, 3. The following table denotes the averaged response for each of the subject areas which addressed Court Improvement issues.

	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Very True</b>	<b>Mostly True</b>	<b>Seldom True</b>	<b>Never True</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
16.	FCRB reports are available in a timely manner for consideration prior to the scheduled hearing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	FCRB findings and recommendations address the importance of stability and permanency for children in foster care.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	The information available in the form of FCRB reports is adequate and of good quality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Findings:**

1. The court has established one board for each 100 children or fraction thereof (pursuant to ARS §8-515.01 A.)
2. Pursuant to ARS 8-515.01(A), each of the local boards should consist of at least five regular members. One vacancy has existed on the GN01 FCRB since 1/1/04 and efforts continue to be made to fill this vacancy.
3. Pursuant to ARS §8-515.01 (B), all prospective board applicants were screened prior to their appointment to their respective local board.
4. The Board meets in the Jackson County Courthouse.
5. FCRB Reports were found in all applicable files.
6. The average length of time between the FCRB meeting and the court's receipt of the FCRB report was 14 days.

**No Recommendations.**

## Appendix A

### *Court Improvement Equipment Inventory*

<b><u>FY</u></b>	<b><u>Item #</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Serial Number</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
2000	SM001	Conf Table/Chairs	na	Mediation – Room 1
2000	SM002	Conf Table/Chairs	na	Mediation – Room2
2000	SM003	PCS/MS Ofc 2000 Pkg	1s6862n1u238xtyw	<i>not provided</i>
2000	SM004	PCS/MS Ofc 2000 Pkg	23NP803	<i>not provided</i>
2000	SM005	Laser Jet Printer	F0102906	<i>not provided</i>
2000	SM006	Workstation	na	Clerk's Office
2001	SM007	Conference Phone	na	Mediation – Room 1
2001	SM008	Computer	<i>not provided</i>	Clerk's Office

The items noted above were provided by the county in closing reports for FY00 – FY01.

## Appendix B

### *Courtroom Observation Completed*

Judicial Officer	Date	Type of Hearing	Case Name / Number
<b>Johnson</b>	5/1/04	PPH / IDH / ADJ / DIS	Adams / 1111
	5/1/04	ADJ / DIS	Bates / 2222
	1/1/02	IGU / GUA	Clark / 3333
	5/8/04	IDH	Dean / 4444
	5/8/04	REV	Edwards / 5555
	5/8/04	REV	Franks / 6666
	5/8/04	PER	Gamez / 7777
<b>Smith</b>	5/15/04	REV	Hays / 8888
	5/15/04	PER	Isaacs / 9999
	5/15/04	PPH / IDH / ADJ / DIS	Jacobs / 1010
	5/22/04	ADJ / DIS	Karlson / 1110
	5/22/04	ITE / TER	Lee / 1210
	5/22/04	PTC	Miles / 1310
<b>Faulkner (Facilitator)</b>	5/1/04	PHC	Adams / 1111
	5/15/04	PHC	Jacobs / 1010



## Appendix C

### *Courtroom Observation - Compliance Exceptions*

Hearing	Required Item	% Compliance
PHC	<i>2a. Size of the meeting room appropriate</i>	67
PPH	3. Addressed ICWA / Tribal membership	67
	13. Determined whether temporary custody was clearly necessary to prevent abuse/neglect	71
	<i>19a. determined whether reasonable efforts made / reasonable to make no efforts to prevent child's removal</i>	83%
	<i>19b. stated factual basis for reasonable efforts determination</i>	75
	<i>19c. Determined if services available to eliminate need for continued removal</i>	62
	20. If child in ADES custody, ordered ADES to make reasonable efforts to provide reunification services	89
	23c. Admonished the parent(s) regarding the consequences if they failed to appear at upcoming hearings and/or participate in reunification services	63
	24. Ensured that copies of all findings, orders and agreements were made available to the parties in the form of a signed minute entry at the conclusion of the hearing	47
RTC	4. determined whether there was probable cause to believe that temporary custody was clearly necessary to prevent further abuse or neglect	50
IDH	4. Addressed ICWA / Tribal membership	42
	11b. If denial and mediation chosen, ordered the parties to participate	73
	12a. If parent(s) absent without cause, found parent(s) had notice of hearing	78
	12b. If parent(s) failed to appear without good cause shown, found parent(s) was properly served	89
	12c. If parent(s) failed to appear without good cause shown, found that the notice advised of the consequences of their failure to appear	0
	<i>20b. Determined if services were available that would eliminate the need for continued removal</i>	60
	21. If child in ADES custody, ordered ADES to make reasonable efforts to provide reunification services	80
PTC	7. Advised the parent(s) in open court regarding the consequences of their failure to attend future proceedings	25
	9a. If proceeding to contested adjudication, entered orders limiting the issues to be litigated at the adjudication hearing	33
	9b. If proceeding to contested adjudication, entered orders requesting preparation of disposition report	0
ADJ	<i>5b. If admission/no contest, determined whether the parent(s) understood the rights being waived</i>	82
	8. Advised the parent that the hearings may go forward in their absence and that failure to attend further proceedings without good cause shown may result in termination / permanent guardianship	86
REV	3. Addressed the findings of the FCRB on the record	78
	8. Set / reaffirmed the permanency hearing not more than 12 months from removal	50
	9. Made the specific finding that it advised the parent(s) of the consequences of failure to attend subsequent proceedings and/or participate in reunification services	80

*Italicized items represent "key requirements" for the hearing in question*

## Appendix C (cont)

### *Courtroom Observation - Compliance Exceptions*

Hearing	Required Item	% Compliance
IGU	<i>1. Hearing held within 30 days of permanency hearing</i>	86
	9. If denial, set the guardianship adjudication hearing within 90 days of the permanency hearing	0
GUA	3b. In accepting admission/no contest plea, determined whether the plea was made knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily	67
	4c. If parent(s) failed to appear, found that the parent was previously admonished of the consequences of their failure to appear	0
	6. Made the finding as to its jurisdiction over the matter/parties before it	40
ITE	<i>1a. Hearing held within 30 days of permanency hearing</i>	38
	2. Inquired regarding possible ICWA relationship	75
	10c. If parent(s) failed to appear, found that the parent was previously admonished of the consequences of their failure to appear	40
TER	3c. If parent(s) failed to appear, found that the parent was previously admonished of the consequences of their failure to appear	33
	<i>6c. If the petitioner met the burden of proof, entered orders for the financial support of the child</i>	82
	<i>6d. If the petitioner met the burden of proof, set/reaffirmed the next dependency review hearing</i>	82

*Italicized items represent “key requirements” for the hearing in question*

## **Appendix D**

### ***Courtroom Observation – Minute Entry Exceptions***

The following table contains items which, although covered by the court in the observed hearing, were not noted in the subsequent minute entry.

<b>JD #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Item</b>
1111	5/1/04	PPH	17. The court determined whether the tasks set forth in the case plan were reasonable and necessary to carry out the case plan goal. <i>ARS 8-824(I)</i>
2222	5/1/04	ADJ	5B. If admission/no contest, the plea was made knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily. <i>Rule 55(D)(I)</i>
7777	5/8/04	PER	8B. The court set forth the factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination. <i>ARS 8-829(B)</i>
1110	5/22/04	ADJ	5C. If admission/no contest, entered a factual basis to support a finding of dependency. <i>Rule 55(D)(I)</i>
1010	5/15/04	PPH	17. The court determined whether the tasks set forth in the case plan were reasonable and necessary to carry out the case plan goal. <i>ARS 8-824(I)</i>

**Appendix E**  
***Court Case Files Reviewed***

<b>Case Name</b>	<b>JD Number</b>
Adams	1111
Bates	2222
Clark	3333
Dean	4444
Edwards	5555
Franks	6666
Gamez	7777
Hays	8888
Isaacs	9999
Jacobs	1010
Karlson	1110

## Appendix F

### *Court Case File - Compliance Exceptions*

Hearing	Required Item	% Compliance
PPH	<i>2b. The hearing was continued and the delay did not exceed 5 days</i>	0
	3. Addressed ICWA / Tribal membership	0
	9. Set a continued initial hearing as to any party not present	75
	13. Determined whether temporary custody was clearly necessary to prevent abuse or neglect	75
	14. Informed the parent(s) / guardian that the hearing may result in further proceedings to terminate parental rights	67
	<i>19b. Stated the factual basis for the reasonable efforts determination</i>	88
	<i>19c. Determined if services were available that would eliminate the need for continued removal</i>	88
	20. If in ADES custody, ordered ADES to make reasonable efforts to provide reunification services	89
IDH	1. Held at the time of the PPH	89
	8. Determined whether paternity had been established	63
	12a. If parent / guardian failed to appear without good cause, found that the parent / guardian had notice of the hearing	33
	18. If ICWA applies, made findings pursuant to ICWA standards	67
SET	1. Each party provided the court with a confidential settlement conference memorandum at least five days prior to the settlement conference	0
	2. Parties consented to the assigned trial judge presiding	0
	3. If unable to reach agreement on all issues, parties advised the court of those issues which would be litigated and the time needed to conduct ADJ	0
ADJ	6. If parent(s) failed to appear without good cause, found that they had notice, were properly served and previously admonished	75
DIS	<i>1. held within 30 days or in conjunction with ADJ</i>	75
	8. Addressed the parent, guardian or Indian custodian and advised them that failure to attend further proceedings without good cause shown and failure to participate in reunification services may result in the termination of parental rights or the establishment of a permanent guardianship	80
REV	<i>1. Held at least once every six months</i>	75
	9. Found that court advised the parent(s), guardian or Indian custodian of the consequences of failure to attend subsequent proceedings and/or participate in reunification services	50
PER	<i>1a. Hearing was held within 30 days of disposition</i>	86
	4. Set review within 6 months	50

*Italicized items represent “key requirements” for the hearing in question*

## Appendix G

### *Interested Party Attendance at Court Hearings*

#### *Courtroom Observation*

Hearing	Mother	Father	Guardian	Mother's Attorney	Father's Attorney	Child's Attorney	Case Manager	AAG	CASA	Other
<b>PPH</b>	72%	39%	0%	89%	56%	94%	100%	100%	0%	67%
<b>IDH</b>	50%	30%	0%	63%	53%	87%	97%	100%	0%	53%
<b>ADJ</b>	45%	18%	0%	64%	50%	82%	95%	95%	0%	52%
<b>DIS</b>	52%	26%	0%	70%	57%	87%	100%	100%	0%	52%
<b>REV</b>	40%	14%	0%	74%	51%	97%	100%	100%	3%	57%
<b>PER</b>	42%	8%	0%	92%	67%	100%	100%	100%	0%	75%
<b>Average</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>59%</b>

#### *Court Case Files*

Hearing	Mother	Father	Guardian	Mother's Attorney	Father's Attorney	Child's Attorney	Case Manager	AAG	CASA	Other
<b>PPH</b>	90%	60%	50%	50%	60%	80%	100%	100%	20%	70%
<b>IDH</b>	90%	60%	55%	55%	64%	91%	100%	100%	9%	82%
<b>ADJ</b>	78%	78%	44%	56%	67%	78%	100%	100%	11%	100%
<b>DIS</b>	75%	75%	38%	50%	63%	63%	100%	100%	13%	100%
<b>REV</b>	63%	75%	38%	63%	25%	75%	80%	100%	0%	75%
<b>PER</b>	100%	100%	67%	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	0%	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>88%</b>

## Appendix H

### *CASA Case Files - Missing/Incomplete Information*

Name	JD #	Missing / Incomplete Case File Information
Adams	1111	Na
Bates	2222	Contact Logs (Adamanski), 1/03 – 3/03
Clark	3333	Contact Logs (Allen), 12/03 – 2/04
Dean	4444	Contact Log (Aster), 11/03
Edwards	5555	Contact Logs (Bellinger), 1/04 – 3/04
Franks	6666	Na
Gamez	7777	Na
Hays	8888	Contact Logs (Brown), 6/99 – 5/01; Legal Party Memo
Isaacs	9999	Na
Jacobs	1010	Na

## Appendix I

### *CASA Volunteer Files – Missing / Incomplete Information*

CASA Volunteer	Missing / Incomplete Information	Training Hours Documented	
		CY03	CY04 (to 5/5/04)
Angela Adamaski	Duplicate ID Badge	0	0
Ann Allen	Duplicate ID Badge	0	0
Auburn Aster	Proof of US Citizenship; Signed Acknowledgement; Duplicate ID Badge	23	6.5
Betty Bellinger	Written Authorization by Judge (re employment with ADES at time of application); Duplicate ID Badge	0	1
Bruce Brown	Duplicate ID Badge	0	1
Carl Carlton	Duplicate ID Badge	0	0
Clarence Clarke	Na	21	0
David Davis	Proof of US Citizenship; Duplicate ID Badge	2	1
Dennis Dean	Notes from Interview; Duplicate ID Badge	23	0



## Appendix J

### *Recommendations and Corrective Action Plans*

Recommendation	Corrective Action Plan
<b><u>R1</u></b> : The team recommends that the Court compile and make available to applicable court staff a manual detailing the steps needed to address dependency case processing.	<b><u>CAP1</u></b> : Court personnel have obtained a copy of a neighboring County's dependency process manual and are in the process of adapting this manual to our specific procedures. This manual should be available for use by all dependency personnel within one month.
<b><u>R2</u></b> : The team recommends that the Court address the requirements for each of the different types of hearings to ensure compliance with statute and rule.	<b><u>CAP2</u></b> : The Court will continue to utilize the Juvenile Benchbook in order to ensure that all hearing requirements are addressed consistently. The Court will ensure that each hearing officer is familiar with this requirement.
<b><u>R3</u></b> : The team recommends that the Court continue to collaborate with personnel from the Clerk's Office to ensure that all requirements are address in minute entries for the various dependency hearings.	<b><u>CAP3</u></b> : Court personnel and staff from the County Clerk's Office have met and begun to collaborate on the usage of the dependency hearing templates provided by the review team. It is the Court's hope that all of the elements from the templates will be included into minute entries on a consistent basis within three months.
<b><u>R4</u></b> : The team recommends that the county coordinator make continuing efforts to offer training opportunities and to document CASA volunteer training completed in DCATS.	<b><u>CAP4</u></b> : The county coordinator will continue to provide regular training opportunities for all CASA volunteers. The county coordinator has also begun communicating more frequently with those in the community who might be able to provide more frequent training for CASA volunteers.
<b><u>R5</u></b> : The team recommends that the county coordinator continue to work with CASA volunteers to ensure their timely submission of required Contact Logs.	<b><u>CAP5</u></b> : In addition to those procedures already in place, the county coordinator will begin to electronically prompt CASA volunteers regarding the timely submission of their Contact Logs. The county coordinator is also planning to address ways to improve performance in this area at their next event.
<b><u>R6</u></b> : The team recommends that the county coordinator ensure that appropriate documentation is maintained in both volunteer and case files.	<b><u>CAP6</u></b> : The county coordinator will continue to work with the county program staff to ensure that all appropriate documentation is retained in each volunteer and case file. The county coordinator will also use the review tools utilized by the team to perform occasional spot inspections on chosen files.

## **Appendix K**

### ***Court Response to Recommendations***

#### **Jackson County Superior Court AOC Recommendations Requiring Corrective Action Plans**

**R1**: The team recommends that the Court compile and make available to applicable court staff a manual detailing the steps needed to address dependency case processing.

**CAP1**: Court personnel have obtained a copy of a neighboring County's dependency process manual and are in the process of adapting this manual to our specific procedures. This manual should be available for use by all dependency personnel within one month.

**R2**: The team recommends that the Court address the requirements for each of the different types of hearings to ensure compliance with statute and rule.

**CAP2**: The Court will continue to utilize the Juvenile Benchbook in order to ensure that all hearing requirements are addressed consistently. The Court will ensure that each hearing officer is familiar with this requirement.

**R3**: The team recommends that the Court continue to collaborate with personnel from the Clerk's Office to ensure that all requirements are address in minute entries for the various dependency hearings.

**CAP3**: Court personnel and staff from the County Clerk's Office have met and begun to collaborate on the usage of the dependency hearing templates provided by the review team. It is the Court's hope that all of the elements from the templates will be included into minute entries on a consistent basis within three months.

**R4**: The team recommends that the county coordinator make continuing efforts to offer training opportunities and to document CASA volunteer training completed in DCATS.

**CAP4**: The county coordinator will continue to provide regular training opportunities for all CASA volunteers. The county coordinator has also begun communicating more frequently with those in the community who might be able to provide more frequent training for CASA volunteers.

**R5**: The team recommends that the county coordinator continue to work with CASA volunteers to ensure their timely submission of required Contact Logs.

**CAP5**: In addition to those procedures already in place, the county coordinator will begin to electronically prompt CASA volunteers regarding the timely submission of their Contact Logs. The county coordinator is also planning to address ways to improve performance in this area at their next event.

**R6**: The team recommends that the county coordinator ensure that appropriate documentation is maintained in both volunteer and case files.

**CAP6**: The county coordinator will continue to work with the county program staff to ensure that all appropriate documentation is retained in each volunteer and case file. The county coordinator will also use the review tools utilized by the team to perform occasional spot inspections on chosen files.